

## AFRICANDER SIDE

Of the Present Controversy in Transvaal Affairs.

### A PASTOR OF JOHANNESBURG

On the Political Parties in the Boer Country—Interesting Historical Facts in Connection With the Contention With the Imperial British Government—The Question of Franchise as to the Outlanders.

Montreal correspondence of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat: There are two sides to the Transvaal controversy, as well as to most other questions, where difference of opinion exist; and, according to Rev. P. G. J. Meiring, pastor of the Dutch Reformed church of Johannesburg, who is at present in Montreal on his way to Washington as the representative of the Pan-Presbyterian Congress, only one side is generally known.

The agitation in the Transvaal he considers to be the work of interested persons in high places, whose object is not the redress of the grievances of the Uitlanders, but the wiping out of the Transvaal as an independent community, and its absorption by Great Britain. Were such not the case, he asks, why the present great outcry against "Kruiger oppression" began concurrently with the victory of the Reform party in the Volksraad in April last, which, as a natural result of such victory, the extension of the franchise and the redress of other admitted grievances would follow by the free action of the Transvaal government and without the need of a resort to war.

As essential to the full understanding of the question of the franchise, Mr. Meiring gave a short history of the settlement of the Transvaal by the Boers and their several encounters with the British. It has been frequently stated that it was the emancipation of the slaves of Cape Colony by the British government that has caused the great "trek" or exodus of the Boers in 1836, leading to the formation of Natal, the Orange free state and the Transvaal. The Boers were said to have been incensed at the abolition of slavery, and for that reason to have left Cape Colony and gone north.

This statement, according to Mr. Meiring, is entirely erroneous and misleading. When the English took possession of Cape Colony, at the beginning of the present century, there were no white men living further north than the Orange river. The inhabitants of the Cape at that time were composed of Dutch, Germans and French. It is the descendants of these who compose the Afrikaner people of the present day, and who now inhabit the Cape Colony, the Transvaal, the Orange Free State and a portion of Natal.

In 1836 a great exodus of the Afrikaners took place from Cape Colony, and marched north into the then uninhabited region beyond the Orange river. Their reasons for abandoning the homes of their ancestors and putting themselves beyond the jurisdiction of the British power were embodied in a document drawn up at the time by their leader, one Piet Retief. Among these reasons were three principal ones. They said that in all controversies which arose between themselves and the Kaffir robbers living on their northern confines, the English governors invariably took the part of the Kaffirs, leaving the property of the Boers, and even the lives, at the mercy of a horde of ruthless barbarians. As another grievance, it was pointed out that whereas the population of the country was almost entirely Afrikaner, and there was scarcely an Englishman there, only the English language was allowed in the law courts. The manner in which the abolition of slavery had been carried out constituted a third grievance. A small compensation had been granted the Boer slaveholders, entirely disproportionate to the value of their holdings, and the compensation was only payable in England. In order to obtain the payment of this small amount awarded to them, it was necessary to operate through English agents in London, and in many cases no payment whatever ultimately reached the Boer applicant, and in cases where payment was ultimately obtained it was only for a fraction of the amount to which they were nominally entitled.

As an indication of the sentiment of the English people of the Cape themselves at this time, Mr. Meiring mentions the incident that a large deputation of British subjects went out to meet the expedition under Retief, and presented the latter with an English Bible, on the fly-leaf of which they inscribed: "With our best wishes on your journey to the North."

Crossing the Orange river and proceeding in a northeasterly direction, Retief and his Boers came upon Natal, the garden of South Africa. That country was then unoccupied and the Boers opened negotiations with the Zulu king for its purchase. After some discussion a price was agreed upon, of so many head of cattle, and these were turned over to the Zulu chieftain. A formal deed of sale was drawn up and signed, defining the boundaries of the purchased territory.

The next day after the purchase the king of the Zulus invited the Boer leaders to a banquet to celebrate the transfer, suggesting that it would create a favorable impression among the Zulu warriors if they came unarmed. The Boers, suspecting nothing, left their arms behind them, and were all murdered in the kraal. Following up this act of treachery, the Zulus fell upon the Boers in the valley and almost exterminated them, killing no less than 900 persons.

When the second expedition of Boer emigrants arrived at Natal and learned the fate of their brothers they determined to punish the treacherous Zulu. They numbered some 250 fighting men, but they boldly attacked the Zulu king, and at the battle of "Blood River" in 1838, the totally routed his army of 20,000 men and sent the fleeing fugitives in all directions.

Thus had the Afrikaners bought a home for themselves in Natal by both their money and their blood, and now proceeded to settle down and cultivate it. One day, however, an English gunboat appeared in the harbor of St. Lucia bay, and Natal was proclaimed to be British.



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British. A few British gold hunters had been prospecting along the coast, and this was made the pretext for the seizure. The Boers indignantly refused to acknowledge the British occupation, took arms against an invading force, and were defeated.

Unable to remain in Natal except as subjects of the power from which they had withdrawn in Cape Colony, they once more abandoned their homes and marched west into the Orange Free State. Hardly, however, had they taken time to settle here when they learned that the English governor, Sir Harry Smith, had proclaimed the country British, basing his action upon the ground that as the Boers had once been British subjects, they were always British subjects, and that wherever they settled became ipso facto, British territory.

Once again did the Boers fight and lose. This time they were declared by the British commander to be rebels, their leader an outlaw, and a price of £2,000 was set upon the latter's head. From the Orange Free State the Afrikaners next went to the country now known as the Transvaal, at that time (1845), a no-man's-land, where neither white man nor black dwelt. By the terms of the Sand river convention, in 1852, England recognized the Transvaal as an independent community, and shortly afterward, finding the Orange Free State of no use to her, and the cost of administration heavy, voluntarily handed that state over to the Boers living there.

In 1870 alluvial gold was discovered in the northeast of the Transvaal, and a number of English and Scotch miners were attracted there. About this time the Boers had become involved in wars with the Kaffir tribes of the north, and were experiencing considerable difficulty in repelling the frequent assaults upon them by the latter. Taking advantage of the situation, some of the foreign miners—the first Uitlanders—were permitted to be in the Transvaal, and the people of the Transvaal, to England, asking English assistance to repel the invaders and administer the Transvaal. In response to the petition the English governor dispatched one Theophilus Shepstone, with a small company of soldiers, who proclaimed the Transvaal English territory.

Again great amazement and indignation filled the breasts of the Boers at this latest action of the British government, and a deputation, among the members of which was Paul Kruger, the present president, was sent to London to protest against the proclamation. The deputation was without result, the request that the proclamation be revoked being refused. A delegation was also sent to Cape Colony, and a similar result following, a second deputation went to England. Finding their efforts fruitless the Boers took up arms, determined that if England was to have the Transvaal it would at least be as a blackened and desolate waste of burned houses and farms. The result was Majuba Hill and Laing's Nek.

Seeing that she had been deceived in believing that the people of the Transvaal desired her intervention, England relinquished her claims to the country and gave the Boers their independence under the nominal suzerainty of the British crown. Mr. Gladstone was at the time premier.

"This," said Mr. Meiring, "was one of the most glorious pages ever written in English history. Instead of determining to be revenged for the defeat of a small force of men, she generously acknowledged her error. I am sorry to see that so noble an action is now going to be negated by the war she is about to make."

In 1884 gold quartz was discovered in the southern part of the Transvaal, and immediately a large foreign population poured into the country. These people, said Mr. Meiring, did not come with the intention of making their home there, but came as vultures to the carrion, and when the skeleton was picked they would fly away again. He did not think it any wonder that the Boers, with their experience in English policy, should have refused to grant the franchise to the new population, whose numbers would enable them to control legislation and take the government of the country out of the hands of those to whom it belonged. It was only a natural measure of self-protection that was taken when the right of franchise was made conditional upon a long term of residence. The Boers asked:

• • • Only a little portion of the green and ancient soil and reap in the land of our birth.

and that right had been denied them at every turn. From Cape Colony to Natal, from Natal to the Orange Free State, from the Free State to the Transvaal, they had encountered British aggression, had fought and bled and abandoned land, after land and home after home in a seemingly fruitless effort to maintain their independence, and now that she had been granted them they were confronted with the danger of being ruled by a transient population, whose only interest in the state consisted in the enrichment of their private fortunes by the exploitation of the gold deposits.

Mr. Meiring does not deny that there has been legitimate ground for grievance in the withholding of the franchise to the extent which has obtained of recent years in the Transvaal. There are two political parties among the Boers, the Conservatives and the Liberals, or progressive party. The latter has contended that the franchise should be broader, and that the principle must be acknowledged that resident aliens entitle one to a vote. Heretofore the latter party has always been in the minority in the Volksraad, but at the elections in April last they obtained a small majority.

The Liberals, having, then, obtained a majority in the Volksraad, the extension of the franchise and the introduction of more liberal laws was about to follow as a natural consequence. In the meantime, however, certain men who had their own interests to serve began an agitation for immediate reform, and made a passing grievance a pretext for their attempt to involve England in a war with the Transvaal.

The dynamite monopoly is the second most important grievance of which the Uitlanders complain. The Transvaal government has granted an exclusive franchise to a large syndicate, composed of German and other capitalists, to manufacture dynamite in the country, and has forbidden the importation of the article from other countries. The price demanded for dynamite by this syndicate is 75 shillings a case, and it is declared that an American company recently offered to deliver it in the Transvaal for 50 shillings.

With regard to this monopoly Mr. Meiring said that it was also one of the matters which the progressive party, now in the majority in the Volksraad, proposed to change, but they had encountered the steady opposition of President Kruger, who had threatened to resign when the popular body reported in favor of the discontinuance of the monopoly. The reason which had influenced the government in granting the concession was, however, not difficult to appreciate. It was suggested that if the importation of dynamite were permitted no company would be likely to establish a powder manufactory in the Transvaal. The country would accordingly be without the means of obtaining a home supply of explosives in the event of war, and might find difficulty in obtaining munitions elsewhere.

As for the statement that the monopoly prevented the working of all but the richest claims, and was an unendurable hardship, Mr. Meiring presented some figures which he claimed disposed of that contention. During the year 1898 he said the total output of gold in the Transvaal was about 1,500,000 ounces, and the profits paid in dividends to shareholders (who, incidentally, mostly lived in England), amounted to \$4,500,000; the sum paid in wages to white laborers was \$2,500,000; the stores account, including dynamite, was \$1,700,000; and the expenditure for native Kaffir labor was \$1,000,000. The same returns showed that the Johannesburg Pioneer Mining Company had paid last year a dividend of 57 1/2 per cent. on their capital; the Ferret Company 300 per cent.; the Crown Reef, 240 per cent.; and other companies almost equally large profits. Industries paying such dividends were not being strangled.

The third principal grievance is the railroad company. The Netherlands Railroad Company holds the exclusive right to build and construct railways, and has also practically a free hand in the matter of rates. The franchise granted to the railway company, however, according to Mr. Meiring, was given before the discovery of gold in the country, and before, therefore, there were any prospects that the enterprise would prove a paying investment. Of late the Progressive party in the Volksraad had been agitating for the expropriation of the railroad and its ownership by the government, but, as in the matter of the dynamite monopoly, the proposal had encountered the steady opposition of the president.

However, in the natural course of events, now that the Progressives have obtained the upper hand, this monopoly would shortly be removed. Mr. Meiring believes that, if the true merits of the present controversy over the Transvaal were known, the English people would not sanction the proposed interference by their government with the rights of the Boers.

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Of Suffering of Shipwrecked Sailors. Enforced Cannibalism.

CHARLESTON, S. C., Sept. 3.—The British steamer Woodruff, Captain Milbrun, arrived from Hamburg 10 days ago. On August 15, 20 miles south of Charleston, she picked up Maurice Anderson and Gudmund Thomassen, survivors of the Norwegian bark Drot, wrecked on August 15 off the Florida coast. The Drot was bound from Penacola to Buenos Ayres. Anderson is a raving maniac, and his companion is shockingly mutilated from bites of the crazed man.

Thomassen tells a dreadful story. The captain of the Drot and seven men were swept overboard and lost in the recent West Indian hurricane. The mate and seven other men put to sea in a raft made from decking. The raft parted soon after, and the mate and one man were separated from the others. The mate's companion was landed at Philadelphia by the German steamer Titan on August 22. He stated that the mate committed suicide.

Of the six men on the other part of the raft one became crazed from exposure and jumped into the sea. Two others, exhausted from suffering, fell overboard and were lost. Anderson, Thomassen and a German seaman drew lots as to which should be eaten, and the none of them had a mouthful since they took the raft. The lot fell to the German. He was killed and the blood was sucked from his veins by the two survivors.

Soon after Anderson lost his reason and savagely attacked his only companion. Thomassen's breast and face were bitten in several places, chunks of flesh being torn out. Both men are now at the city hospital, and the Norwegian consul has taken the case in hand. Thomassen is a native of Stevanger, Norway.

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### FINANCIAL FACTS.

General Tone of the Wall Street Market Continues Good—Railroad Earnings Satisfactory.

Special Correspondence of Intelligencer. NEW YORK, Sept. 2.—Conditions on the stock exchange show little change from our last advice. Some hesitation was produced by the unsettling effect of the Transvaal difficulties upon the London market, but as the best opinion inclines to the belief that there will be no war and that President Kruger will ultimately make concessions, no serious injury to confidence followed.

The market is of course sensitive to foreign affairs and must always remain so in these days of close commercial and financial interdependence; yet were war to happen between England and the Transvaal it would find this country far better able to take care of its finances than usual, and no one anticipates that any flood of American securities could be returned to us, for the simple reason that the available supply over there has been so greatly reduced by shipments to the United States during the last two or three years. Any important declines in London would bring out eager buying on this side of the Atlantic.

The general tone of the local market continues good. Confidence in a broader and more active market during the autumn is almost universal. This, of course, is based upon the extraordinary wave of prosperity which extends over the whole country, and which as yet shows no sign of having spent its force. The iron and kindred industries are making a wonderful record; our whole history fails to show a parallel. Raw materials, such as pig iron, copper and tin, show advances from lowest prices of from 50 to 100 per cent. Finished products, of course, show no such rise; but in many instances price is a secondary condition with buyers, delivery being the main want. So far high prices do not seem to have checked business, and there has been a remarkable absence of speculative buying. Later on these conditions must check purchases and defer repairs, improvements and new enterprises until values recede to a normal basis, but this stage of affairs has not yet been reached. Until it approaches we are not likely to witness any important recession in the stock market.

Railroad earnings continue making satisfactory gains, giving rise to all sorts of hopes regarding increased dividends. Some of these are likely to meet with disappointment; for present condition mean increased costs in operating that will materially modify unreasonable expectations. A little skepticism regarding dividend rumors will do no harm. Some of the best railroad stocks are held at prices that offer slight chances for further profits. As already intimated in these advices, however, there are a number of low-priced issues of reorganized properties which had been more or less neglected and which must show large appreciation as they approach from a non-dividend to a dividend paying basis.

The market is likely to have the support of his operators for some weeks to come; and as these return from summer resorts dealings will resume with greater activity. Comparatively little attention is being paid to crop reports. It is certain, however, that we shall have sufficient wheat and corn for home and foreign wants, and that our farmers will obtain reasonably good prices for their crops. Prosperity is shining upon the fields of the west as well as upon the mills of the east.

This Saturday's bank statement is not likely to be a good one, nor is there likely to be any increase in the bank reserves during the month of September, for the reason that it is the principal crop moving month of the year, and money, therefore, is more liable to be drawn from this centre than returned to it from the various sections of the country. What will make the bank statement worse than otherwise is the payment which was made to the government by the City bank for the purchase of the custom house, the amount being \$3,263,000. The small surplus of the banks at this season of the year, when the natural current is against this money centre, is of course a reason for conservatism, and should be a wholesome check against excessive buying on borrowed money, and this is calculated to dwarf the business of the "street" for the next two or three weeks at least. I therefore advocate quick in-and-out transactions, as temporary higher rates for money may be used at any time to force lower prices.

HENRY CLEWS.

### Wool.

Bradstreet's: The condition of the market is strong, with fair sales noted, although the feeling is quiet compared with recent heavy business. Sales in Boston for the week foot up nearly 5,000,000 pounds, of which 4,350,000 pounds were domestic. The transactions include nearly 3,000,000 pounds territory, Oregon and California wools, these grades yet meeting with most demand. The secured basis for territory fine medium and fine is yet 50¢/52 cents, with staples lots ranging up to 55¢/57 cents. A line of Oregon staple sold on the secured basis of 53 cents. Fleece wools are firm at 33 cents for washed delaines and No. 1 Ohio combings, but sales are moderate. Unwashed fleeces are more called for, and range mostly at 22¢/24 cents for one-quarter and three-quarters blood. Pulled wools are quiet, but firm. The next London sale will commence September 19, but it is thought that there will not be over 80,000 bales of fine wool for the sale, the bulk of the offerings being coarser grades.

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